

# **Memorandum on Sri Lankan Tamils Issue**

Submitted by  
**Members of  
'TESO' Delegation**

led by  
**Dr. M.K.Stalin**

# **Memorandum**

## **On**

### **Sri Lankan Tamils Issue**

The brutal civil war in Sri Lanka will remain as a terrible shame and stain in the history of mankind. It has shaken up the world community which is against any such massacre in the world.

As early as 1961, D.M.K. passed a resolution requesting the Government of India to take up the issue of Eelam Tamils to the United Nations Organization.

In 1981, condemning the killing of the innocent Tamils by the sinhala chauvinists and the atrocities of Sri Lankan Govt. against the Tamils. An agitation was organized at Chennai. At that time a few individuals committed self immolation for the cause of the Eelam Tamils.

On 25<sup>th</sup> July 1983 the Sinhala extremists barged into the Velikadai prison in Sri Lanka and butchered as many as 35 Tamils including front line Tamil leaders like Thangadurai, Kuttimani and Jegan. On hearing the tragic news, we mobilized as many as 8,00,000 people and organized a massive protest in Chennai.

Ten million signatures from the Indian Tamils were collected and submitted to the United Nations by us, pleading for immediate intervention to restore normalcy and stop the atrocities of the oppressive Sinhalese Government.



The TESO organized the first National Conference in 1986 at Madurai, which was attended by the national leaders including the former Prime Minister of India A.B.Vajpayee, the former chief Ministers N.T.Rama Rao, and H.N.Bahuguna, the former Union Ministers also took part in it.

The TESO conference requested the Government of India to raise the issue of the Eelam Tamils in the **UN, NAM** and the **CHOGM** to find solution to the problems of the Eelam Tamils.

We had apprised Prime Ministers of India of the sad plight of Eelam Tamils and urged the Government of India to hold negotiations quickly with Sri Lankan Government to alleviate the sufferings of Eelam Tamils.

Deeply moved by the loss of innocent lives in the unending civil war in Sri Lanka, we passed a resolution on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2008, in support of Eelam Tamils and forwarded it to the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan singh and the Congress President Tmt. Sonia Gandhi.

On 24<sup>th</sup> October 2008, we organized the longest Human chain extending across all the districts in Tamil Nadu and subsequently, a statewide general strike was also observed.

On 4<sup>th</sup> December 2008, an all-party delegation went to Delhi, met the Prime Minister and impressed upon him to take necessary and immediate steps to stop the genocide in Sri Lanka.

After the end of the genocidal war in May 2009, we urged the Government of India to send a high-level parliamentary delegation to Sri Lanka and conduct an on-the-spot study to gain first-hand knowledge about the rehabilitation and resettlement

process promised by the Sri Lankan Government to the Government of India and also to assess the implementation of assistance given by the Government of India to the war affected Tamils in Sri Lanka.

On our demand, the Government of India deputed a delegation of Parliamentarians to visit the refugee camps in Sri Lanka. They found IDPs crowded in inadequate tents, enclosed by barbed wire, and kept like cattles in deplorable conditions under the sun and rain with neither adequate roofing nor hygienic surroundings. Tamils in those camps suffer even without the basic medical facilities and are highly prone to epidemics.

The Sri Lankan Government had also failed to adhere to the internationally accepted standards of treatment for internally displaced persons.

Upon receiving a report of the pathetic situation prevailing in the IDP Camps from the Parliamentary Delegation led by Mr. T.R. Baaka, M.P, Leader of the D.M.K. Party in Parliament, We took up this matter with the Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and on the basis of which the Government of India extended various benefits to the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

After having understood the pathetic scenario of Tamils in IDP camps, we generously donated clothes, medicines, money, sterils, etc., which were sent by ships through the International Committee of Red Cross to Sri Lanka on 13.11.2008, 22.04.2009 and 08.05.2009. Even those relief materials were not distributed to the suffering Eelam Tamils. The Government of India was informed that the donated materials were cornered by the Sinhalese and they did not reach the intended beneficiaries.



The Sri Lankan President Rajapaksha gave a loud promise that he would rehabilitate the 3,00,000 inmates of IDP camps by December 2009. But so far he has not fulfilled and one of his promises. The continued post-war sufferings of Tamils in Sri Lanka compelled us to revive TESO and organize **Eelam Tamils Rights Protection Conference** on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2012 at Chennai. This International Conference was attended by the political party leaders and Human Rights activists from Sri Lanka, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Norway, Morocco, Nigeria, Turkey, Malaysia and Singapore as well as from India.

In this conference, fourteen resolutions were adopted pleading for resettlement of the refugees and an acceptable solution for the problems.

After 2009, in the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka the Eelam Tamil population has faced serious large-scale human rights abuses which continued unchecked. Under these circumstances we prefer this Memorandum for your esteemed consideration and appropriate action in this regard.

We would like to place the following human rights issues faced by the Eelam Tamils in Sri Lanka for your consideration:

### **State-sponsored Demographic change**

The houses, agricultural lands, industries and other properties of thousands of Tamils were forcibly taken from them and distributed to Sinhala soldiers. Sinhala families are being settled there in large numbers.

## **Militarization of the Traditional Tamil areas**

The Sinhalese army is being permanently stationed in Tamil areas, in the ratio of one soldier for every five Tamil civilians. There is a military camp in every village. There are many guard posts at every intersection. Retired army officers are posted as Governors in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. No public or social functions are allowed without military permission. Army controls most of the economic activities. It is engaged predominantly in the use of development aid, construction of hotels eateries, petty shops etc.

Trade and vegetable cultivation in the traditional lands of Tamils were forcibly taken over by the army. Military over – rules the police in most cases, even though the police regularly report to the Ministry of Defence.

## **Land Grabbing**

Traditional Lands of Eelam Tamils were deprived of and Sinhalese are being settled hurriedly there.

## **Displacement**

Officially, 1,25,000 Tamils fled from their homeland during the final phase of the war in 2009. One third of the Tamils had already fled the island due to genocidal oppression. Almost one million Tamils remain overseas, of which 2,00, 000 are in India, mostly in the refugee camps.



## **Disappearances / extrajudicial executions**

The International Committee of Red Cross reports that 15,780 persons are missing in the Northern Province. Disappearances and extrajudicial executions continue in the North and in Colombo with total impunity, mostly directed towards Tamils.

## **Indefinite detention without trial**

Thousands of Tamils are being held for many years without trial either under the Prevention of Terrorism Act or without any legal sanction.

## **Suppression of Religious freedom**

Buddhism has been declared as a State Religion. Large scale destruction of Hindu temples, Christian churches and Islamic mosques continue to be encouraged. For example, 1500 Hindu temples were converted as Buddhist vihars while the churches and mosques are occupied by the Sinhala army.

## **Pathetic Condition of the Tamil Women**

The condition of the Tamil women in Sri Lanka is very pathetic. The oppressive military campaign that ended in May 2009 left an estimated 90,000 Tamil war widows. Tamil women are particularly targeted and exploited by the Sinhala Army. Violent and forced sexual abuses by the Sinhala soldiers make women's security a major issue.

Restrictions on trade and commerce have resulted in Tamil merchants leaving the trade, compulsorily to the Sri Lankan military. Even sign boards were changed into Sinhala language only.

The Sinhalese Government is following a discriminatory trade policy favouring Sinhalese traders only. The Tamil merchants are neglected and penalized. The Sinhalese Army is entrenched in all areas of civilian life and has taken over the economy. Even saloons are captured and run by the army men. Hence, there is no space for economic revival of Tamils. For instance, the Highway from Jaffna to Colombo, A- 9, previously used by the Tamil merchants, is at present totally controlled by the Sinhalese ex- servicemen. Even sign boards along the A – 9 which were used to be bilingual are now only in Sinhala language.

### **Restrictions on NGO access**

The international Committee of Red Cross was asked to close its offices in the Northern Province in 2010.

### **Sufferings of the Tamil Children**

Tamil children continue to struggle from the effects of years of discrimination and an oppressive war thrust upon them. Tamil areas have twice the rate of infant mortality against the rest of the island; 40% of children under 5 years of age are malnourished and are underweight compared to 20% in the rest of the island. Maternal mortality is four times against that of elsewhere.



## **Social Discrimination**

No social functions and religious ceremonies can be organized without the prior approval of the Army which are usually denied. Tamils cannot even host anyone in their house without the Army's consent.

### **Unbridled attack on Tamil Students of Jaffna University**

The atrocities of the Sri Lankan Government upon are continuing unabated. Recently the Sri Lanka army entered the Jaffna University, attacked the innocent and unarmed Tamil students and injured many of them. Further, several students were also taken into custody by the army.

### **Elimination social infrastructure**

The Sri Lankan government is now carrying out an intensive and systematic programme of erasing the Tamil language, culture and religion and diluting the concentration of Tamils in areas where they have historically been predominant. This manifests itself in the renaming of 89 Tamil villages, redrawing of village, district and town boundaries, demolishing 367 Hindu temples, non-allocation of funds of resettle and rehabilitate internally displaced Tamil families.

The Sri Lankan government is also not allocating funds to schools, hospitals and other infrastructure where the Tamils live predominantly. It is also promoting Sinhala settlements on Tamil land and Sinhalese takeover of the economic life to Tamil areas, which impoverishes the Tamils, and the development of army camps to intimidate them.

## Tamil Language, Education and Culture

The identity of culture and pride of language and Tamil education, are ridiculed by Sinhala fanatics who are trying to eradicate the cultural and linguistic identity of Tamils. The Tamil language is not given due importance on par with Sinhala language.

The above mentioned acts of genocide and heinous war crimes unleashed against unarmed innocent Tamil civilians bear shameful testimony to the widespread Human Rights violations in Sri Lanka.

Now, how will the civilized world help to heal the wounds of extended civil war and put an end to the decades - old sufferings of Tamils in Sri Lanka?

Is it not the duty of every right thinking individual, International Humanitarian Organizations and elected Governments to answer the cries of Tamil brothers and sisters in Sri Lanka.

We are from the homeland of Gautama Buddha, MK Gandhi and Thiruvalluvar who are universal icons for Brotherhood, Peace and Justice, to submit this memorandum to UNHRC – a forum which takes great pride in upholding international humanitarian laws and the embassies of friendly nations.

In the light of the above mentioned facts, we the member of TESO led by Dr. Kalaignar M. Karunanidhi, Former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, request your Excellency to initiate immediate and appropriate action to prevail on UNHRC for appropriate action and implementation of the following.

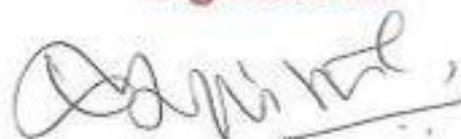


1. Immediate withdrawal of security forces and restoration of habitations to Tamils.
2. Rehabilitation and resettlement of displaced Tamils.
3. Conduct an impartial inquiry by an international agency on the Human Right violations and war crimes, committed against the Eelam Tamils.
4. Restore dignified life to Tamils living in Sri Lanka.

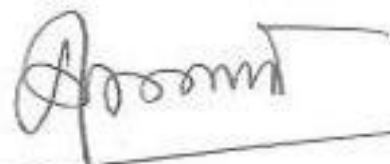
### Names

### Signatures

1. **Dr. M.K. STALIN, M.L.A.**  
Leader of the Delegation



2. **Dr. K. VEERAMANI**



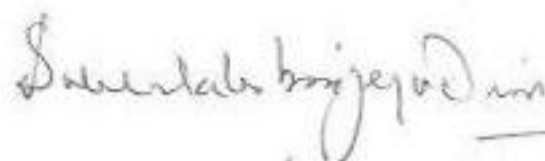
3. **THOL. THIRUMAVALAVAN, M.P.**




4. **Prof. SUBA. VEERAPANDIAN**



5. **Tmt. SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN**



6. **T.R. BAALU, M.P.**



### Enc :

1. Beats of Bleeding Hearts - (A Book with TESO Resolutions)
2. Videographic evidences of war crimes-CD.
3. Voice for voiceless-CD.

**Dated :**

**2013**

**New Delhi**